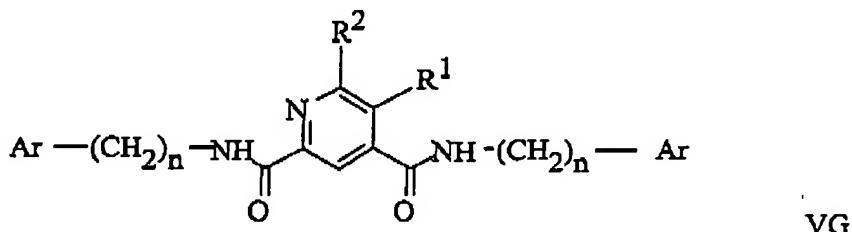


LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:**1-2 (cancelled)**

3 (original). A combination, comprising valdecoxib, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and an allosteric carboxylic inhibitor of MMP-13 of Formula VG



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

R¹ and R² independently are hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, C₁-C₆ alkyl,

C₁-C₆ alkoxy, C₂-C₆ alkenyl, C₂-C₆ alkynyl, NO₂, NR⁴R⁵, CN, or CF₃;

n is 1, and

Each Ar independently is aryl or Het, wherein aryl is phenyl or substituted phenyl, and Het is an unsubstituted or substituted heteroaryl group.

4 (currently amended). A pharmaceutical composition, comprising a combination of valdecoxib, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and an allosteric carboxylic inhibitor of MMP-13, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the combination according to claim 3 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, diluent, or excipient.

5 (currently amended). A method of treating a disease or disorder selected from cartilage damage, inflammation, arthritis, and pain in a mammal, comprising administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective amount of a combination of

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~~valdecoxib, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and an allesteric carboxylic inhibitor of MMP-13, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof the combination according to claim 3.~~

6 (original). The method according to Claim 5, wherein the disease or disorder is rheumatoid arthritis.

7 (original). The method according to Claim 5, wherein the disease or disorder is osteoarthritis.

8 (original). The method according to Claim 5, wherein the disease or disorder is joint inflammation.

9 (original). The method according to Claim 5, wherein the pain is joint pain.